

VIETNAM—A MISERABLE CIVIL WAR

Mr. YOUNG of Ohio. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may proceed for 8 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. YOUNG of Ohio. Mr. President, historically, there are no such countries as North Vietnam and South Vietnam. For thousands of years, the Vietnamese have lived in the land area which, since 1954, has been termed North Vietnam and South Vietnam. Historically, the Vietnamese people are great warriors. They have a noble tradition and a very great history of having hurled back invaders from the Chinese Empire throughout many, many years. Monuments within Vietnam commemorate these victories and stand as memorials to warlord rulers of Vietnam.

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara is said to have made a tough statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in which he said:

The war in Vietnam was not and is not a civil war. It is a direct and flagrant aggression by North Vietnam.

This was a blatant misstatement of fact. The Geneva Accords of 1954 provided neutrality, self-determination, and free elections for Vietnam. At that time the United States, through its representatives, agreed to the Geneva Accords. It is specifically stated in the Geneva agreement, and I quote:

The military demarcation line at the 17th parallel is provisional and should not in any way be considered as constituting a political or territorial boundary.

Since that time all land area north of the 17th parallel is termed North Vietnam and the area south of this provisional demarcation line is referred to as South Vietnam.

Very definitely, this administration has involved more than 300,000 men of our Armed Forces in a miserable civil war in Vietnam. While on a study mission in Vietnam early last October, General Westmoreland stated to the junior Senator from Ohio, "The bulk of the Vietcong fighting us in South Vietnam were born and reared in South Vietnam." He made this statement to me one evening in Saigon. He will not deny it. Furthermore, no one can deny that Prime Minister Ky, the flamboyant air marshal, so-called, of the South Vietnamese Air Force who was installed, by 10 generals last June as Prime Minister of the Saigon government when those general overthrew the civilian government of Saigon, was born and reared in Hanoi. It may be startling to Defense Secretary McNamara to learn that Ky and other officials in the Saigon government and generals of the army of Saigon forces fighting the Vietcong, were themselves born and reared in North Vietnam. General Richard Stilwell informed the junior Senator from Ohio that 80 percent of the armed forces of South Vietnam fighting in the Mekong Delta were born and reared in the Mekong Delta which is south and west of Saigon. The civilian head of the National Liberation Front, which is the political organization directing the Vietcong, is a Saigon lawyer. It is stated that he is not a Communist.

When the Vietnamese were fighting for their freedom against French colonialism their official organization was termed the National Liberation Front and their fighting forces were termed Vietminh. Many of those freedom fighters against French colonialism are fighting now as Vietcong to establish, they hope, a South Vietnam free from the presence of foreign soldiers. Of course, this is a civil war. In fact, in recent weeks the violence and rioting in Danang, Saigon, Hue and elsewhere in South Vietnam have indicated a revolt within a civil war. Defense Secretary McNamara is just as wrong now in denying that a miserable civil war is raging in Vietnam as he was in May 1962 in a briefing at Saigon, when he said, "The war is being won." Still dressed in khaki and hiking shoes that he wore during his field tour, with his notebooks filled with information and opinions, he answered a skeptical reporter, "Every quantitative measurement we have shows we are winning the war." Also, at that time 4 years ago, in the luxurious air-conditioned headquarters in Saigon, Gen. Paul D. Harkins, the American commander, waxed optimistic with impressive statistics of Vietcong killed and of our winning the war. This was precisely how the French staff officers comforted themselves during the Indo-China war early in 1954 shortly before Dienbienphu was overrun by the Vietnamese. Bad news was derided as spurious pessimism.

The forces of the National Liberation Front fought for freedom against the French attempt to reestablish their oppression and colonialism at the end of World War II, and despite massive military aid given by our Government to the French in 1953 and 1954, including airplanes, tanks, munitions, artillery, machineguns. The French were besieged and defeated at Dienbienphu which General Navarre had established and garrisoned as an offensive base. Following this surrender on May 8, 1954, of the French, Moroccan, and Vietnamese allied with them against the Vietminh, and about 12,000 survivors of the French Foreign Legion, and the withdrawal of the French colonial forces, Ho Chi Minh was elected president in the only election held in Vietnam.

We Americans, supplanting French colonialism, established by the operations of our CIA a puppet government in Saigon and President Diem called off the elections stipulated in the Geneva Accords to be held in 1956. President Eisenhower in his reminiscences wrote that had the election been held Ho Chi Minh, the George Washington of Vietnam, would have received 80 percent of the vote of the Vietnamese people living to the south and north of the 17th parallel demarcation line.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The 3 minutes of the Senator from Ohio have expired.

Mr. YOUNG of Ohio. I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 3 additional minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. YOUNG of Ohio. Mr. President, Secretary of State Dean Rusk said again last week—and he has repeated the statement since, in fact he has made this

statement so many times that one feels like saying put on a new record—"American soldiers are fighting in Vietnam because of commitments made by three Presidents."

This Thursday marks the birthdate of Adolf Hitler, born in Austria, April 28, 1889. Hitler was the author of the "big lie." He and his Nazis boasted, if you state a lie repeatedly many, many times, it will come to be believed. This seems to be the technique of Secretary Rusk and other apologists for our involvement in a miserable civil war in Vietnam with hundreds of thousands of American G.I's.

To speak charitably of Secretary Rusk and other "war hawks" who repeatedly claim that American boys are fighting and dying in Vietnam because of commitments made by three Presidents, let me say if they are not resorting to the big lie technique, my comment, generous to them, is that they are reckless and careless with the truth.

Our late great President John F. Kennedy stated:

Transforming Vietnam into a Western redoubt is ridiculous.

Also, on September 3, 1963, shortly before he was assassinated, he said:

I don't think that unless a greater effort is made by the Government to win popular support that the war can be won out there. In the final analysis, it is their war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it—the people of Vietnam—against the Communists. We are prepared to continue to assist them but I don't think that the war can be won unless the people support the effort, and, in my opinion, in the last 2 months the Government has gotten out of touch with the people.

On the day that General Eisenhower left the White House, January 20, 1961, the total of U.S. military advisory personnel had been increased during his administration from 327 in 1953 to 625 in 1961. He made our initial commitment to South Vietnam in a letter to President Diem of South Vietnam stating:

I am instructing the American Ambassador . . . to examine with you . . . how an intelligent program of American aid . . . can serve to assist Vietnam in its present hour of trial.

He added:

The purpose of this offer is to assist the Government of Vietnam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means. . . . The U.S. Government hopes that such aid, combined with your own continuing efforts, will contribute effectively toward an independent Vietnam endowed with a strong government.

It is evident therefore, that Secretary Dean Rusk and other administration apologists for waging an American war in Vietnam are reckless and careless with the truth. There was no commitment by three Presidents. Regretably, there is a commitment by one President, the present Commanding Officer of our Armed Forces, President Johnson.

Vietnam was never, and is not now, of strategic or economic importance to the defense of the United States.